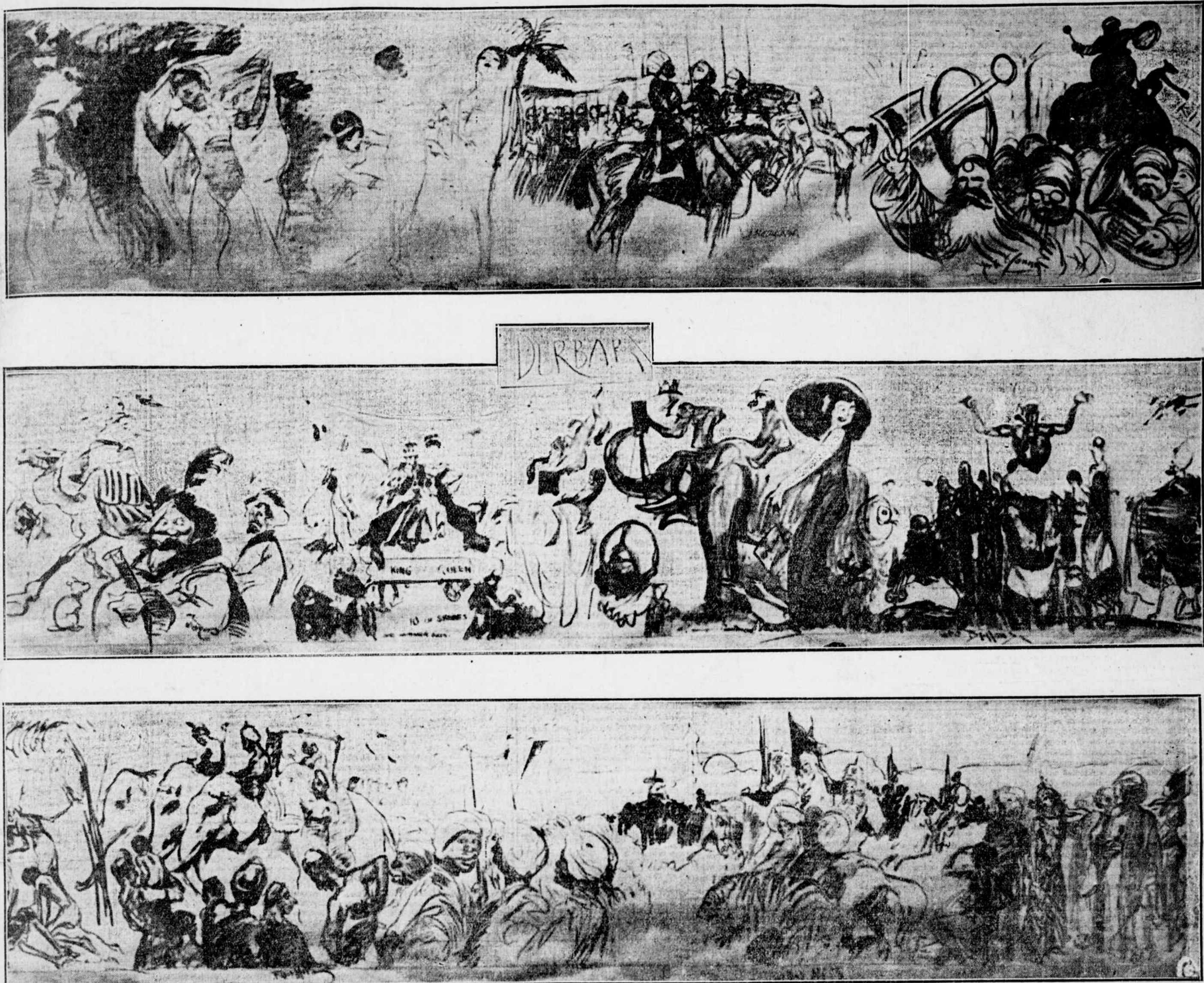


No Less Than Thirteen Artist-Cooks Had a Finger in This Broth of a Picture



The Picture Here Reproduced in Three Sections Was Drawn in Twenty Minutes Upon a Continuous Strip Seventy Feet Long at the Recent MacDowell Club Dinner by Thirteen Well Known Artists, All Working Coincidentally. Reading from Left to Right the Sections Were Drawn by the Following: Irving R. Wiles, Nell Brinkley, Wallace Morgan, Art. Young, Hy Mayer, James Montgomery Flagg, Boardman Robinson, George Bellows, John Sloan, F. Luis Mora, J. W. Alexander, Dan Smith and H. B. Eddy.

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They Were All Stirring at Once, and in Twenty Minutes Completed Their Brobdingnagian Task.

THE largest picture ever made in the history of the world in twenty minutes was produced before a magnificent audience in the Vanderbilt Gallery at the Fine Arts Building last Sunday night.

We have had nothing like it before in this country. Thirteen crack cross-country marathoners in black and white cartooned over ten miles of perspective and an actual seventy feet of panel. In twenty minutes, one-third of an hour, these thirteen heroes of chalk, stump or charcoal had developed a gorgeous representation of the incomparable durbur.

The English language is impotent in description. This is true partly because the regular art critic of The Tribune was away, and the writer, who is a member of the sporting staff, was assigned to cover the steeplechase features of the occasion. As a steeplechase event it was calculated to test the jumping ability, strength and endurance of each candidate to the utmost.

The record shows that size had little to do with success, as good large and good small racers performed with equal distinction. For instance, Hy Mayer and Nell Brinkley. Some were of the perfect chaser type, others carried more than 200 pounds. And George Bellows, for one, stood at least 27 hands high.

It was a brilliant event. There were thirteen racers shown by such pretty steps as Irving R. Wiles, Nell Brinkley, Wallace Morgan, Art Young, Hy Mayer, Boardman Robinson, James Montgomery Flagg, George Bellows, John Sloan, F. Luis Mora, J. W. Alexander, Dan Smith and H. B. Eddy. It was a high toned, patrician bunch of fast, beautifully tempered, well bred contestants, with lots of style and action. More of this spectacular sportsman-like competition would be welcome.

John W. Alexander, the veteran, performing alongside Nell Brinkley, the ultra-modern favorite, gave an additional dash to the affair. But it cannot too often be emphasized at the outset that there was not a worm, maimed, blind, halt or otherwise unround one in the whole string.

The race was run before the most exclusive gatherings of the season. Only those who are members of the MacDowell Club were present. The MacDowell Club is not an organization which any one with the price of an admission ticket may hope to join. All of those present the other night were well, and, in some cases, favorably known to each other. The quality of the artistic temperament shown was very high, and there were many previous blue ribbon winners present, who kept, however, modestly in the background, dressed in bright yellow, blue and pink.

club each individual went home and only by chance made acquaintances. With the formation of the MacDowell Club these scattered units were brought together, and while the club is rather exclusive it is along the lines of good fellowship and clubbable qualities rather than along the lines of bank account.

Inquiry at the Fine Arts Building early in the evening as to when the racers would pass under the wire elicited the information from the doorman that the members of the club were enjoying a superb collation, that there were half a dozen varieties of punch and all kinds of bottled sociability on hand, and that when these matters were disposed of the trumpet would be sounded. The doorman was not only courteous but correct. And right here is a good place to mention that too much credit cannot be given Ben Ali Haggis for his stage managing of the great programme, as he made it an evening that will long be remembered by all fortunate enough to participate.

While many of the women were enjoying their cigarettes at 10:30 o'clock The Tribune man was informed by one of the male members that, although the best, quickest and most satisfactory way to go find a hospital in an emergency is to go to Sheepshead Bay and shout for Governor Hughes, the club had decided there was no law against holding a snappy event indoors, and had therefore arranged to have a novel race, quietly conducted.

The conversation was interrupted at this point by the appearance of Master Max Rosenzweig, twelve years old, carrying a violin and a tool box, on which he stood, apparently unconscious of the many wondrous glances cast at him. Miss Claire Rathsel accompanied the young phenomenon on the piano. He played three difficult pieces exquisitely, his violin being under perfect control at all times.

The clubman then went into a description—welcoming a chance to revert to the subject—of the competitors that were now being groomed for the durbur sweepstakes by their vigor and finish, and I concluded there would be a wonderful lot of step on exhibition throughout the next twenty minutes.

Looking them over before the race began was an interesting occupation. Mr. Wiles, the painter of portraits, was to take the first position at the left of the course, and Nell Brinkley, in a pink dainty, was assigned to canter at his right.

As he was going to do the King and Queen, he honored the occasion by wearing regular socks, the first time he has made a heat without white socks this season.

Boardman Robinson, of Staten Island, was finding it difficult to stand still as the time for the race to start drew near. He wore his customary homemade hair cut, but while under way removed his silk hat. If his silk hats could speak they would answer: "We are seven."

George Bellows can paint a prizefight so vividly that women have been known to faint at the sound of the blows. He can draw the Fallades from Hoboken to Nyack, twenty-six and one-half miles, in five minutes, put in all the breweries, tugboats and barges, and not omit any of the beauty and fashion of Riverside Drive in the foreground.

John Sloan is another "dangerous" man. He had to take a crack at the capitalistic form of government by putting several famina stricken Indians in the Dazzling Durbur procession. Mr. Sloan is a man of convictions, and simply will not pretend for anybody.

Mr. Mora, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Smith and Mr. Eddy all showed stamina and performed with brilliant execution. Their actions will be described in detail later in this review.

Ben Ali Haggis blew his policeman's whistle three times, at which the contestants rushed to their places. Straightway the stir and hum of the gathering died.

Every face turned to the north, where the thirteen racers were vigorous for the course. The whistle sounded short and sharp.

"They're off!" rose like a summer zephyr from the low-necked crowd.

Then the spectators saw them in splendid bursts of speed, heads high, muscles tense, all racers in the pink of condition, full of life and vim, and handsome as a picture. Before the first post had been reached they did some amusing tricks and were loudly encored.

All through the wonderful race they never forgot the great distance to be covered, made no mistakes and never attempted to "close" with their side mounts.

Some very close places began at once to show through the charcoal dust. Bets began to be wagered that John W. Alexander would beat "Dan" Smith by a head.

Not having his silk hat he must, it seemed, be permitted at least one white kid glove. And in the mean time his elephant was waiting for its trunk. With an affectionate tap of his kid glove he made the elephant smile.

Several things began to show up that were new to me, and I went to a male member of the MacDowell Club and explained that I was a sporting department man and would be compelled to resign from this assignment unless he would take me over the hurdles that all of those thirteen cross-country cartoonists were jumping.

He asked me what it was that seemed to require the attention of a trained artist. I told him that the camels in the durbur

lying down. Later it proved to be the throne.

"Art" Young drew a group, the foremost member in it resembling, to the untrained eye, a turban, a cross of a Soudanese Arab with a Hester street Mahometan. The others may look more lovable. I said to myself, and turned my eye elsewhere to give Mr. Young time to reform.

An artist dropped a piece of chalk. Nothing daunted, he picked it up again, and not an instant too soon, for the racers on either side had sped swiftly on.

The elephant is said to have forty thousand muscles in its trunk. Boardman Robinson was trying, in twenty minutes, to get these muscles in place, but gave it up toward the end. He wasted some valuable time stopping to put on a white kid glove.

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parade seemed to me to have rather too wild an expression for an animal renowned the world over for an extreme passiveness.

I had always understood that a camel was a docile, and somewhat stupid beast.

His eye lighted up. He said: "These drawings that you see here this evening are what are known as combining the scientific and ideal."

"Oh," I said, ashamed.

"Yes," he replied. "Just so. These artists could not rest satisfied with copying the facts of nature—they must go further and draw figures, not merely as they appear to their bodily eyes, but as they would appear to the artist after doing the durbur for nine or ten days."

I laughed with relief at this. I could understand now what the artists were doing. With only one dinner to work on they were producing animals and people that would have done them credit if they had not been bed for a fortnight.

"Like Raphael," continued my informant, "these artists here this evening are drawing men and women, not as they are, but as they ought to be."

I could not agree wholly with him in this, because some of the men and women in the durbur parade, as it was now taking shape, did not seem to me to be in good repair. The camels had no suavity or sobriety of manner, and, although you expect a more or less chattering expression on the face of a monkey, this characteristic is greatly exaggerated in every drawing where monkeys had any part.

The artist, "but he couldn't have done what any of these thirteen are doing. When the time at the disposal of Michael Angelo was limited, he was, as the saying is, decidedly up against it."

Then, with a proud sweep of his right arm, he added: "Not so with the artists of to-day!"

The pretty girls of H. B. Eddy and Nell Brinkley showed lines having more variety of curvature, and the forms disclosed by them were more individual than I had ever seen. I was beginning to grasp the things that were being said to me. Unflinching truthfulness was not, as in reporting a horse race, of prime necessity for an artist. Very well, then. I cocked my ear for more.

"Any object may be drawn in a manner which is picturesque," my new friend instructed me. "or not picturesque, according to the temper of the artist."

"That monkey taking moving pictures from the top of that grinning elephant's head is what you call a picturesque production, then?" I inquired.

"The temper of an artist who produces picturesque work of that character," he replied, "is observant and playful. If the elephant had been shown as morose, you would have known that the artist was a man of an entirely different disposition."

"Do I make myself clear? The picturesque is always easily recognizable by its love of accident and variety of line and character. When in excess it violently exaggerates these accidents, varieties and effects."

My pedigree? Oh, don't let's stop for that now!

It Is Seventy Feet in Length and Proved the Largest Thing at MacDowell Club Dinner.

with all of these flashing figures on that seventy-foot panel. At least, I comforted myself by believing that the artists were suffering from a condition technically known as "in excess."

As the time was drawing to a close they were all using the most summary means of expression. The Royal Pomp and Panoply of the Earth's Greatest Fascist would, in a manner of speaking, be unfolded before the eyes of the crowd in another moment. One could see already that the very imagination had been outdone.

It is safe to say that a comparatively small number of those fortunate enough to have witnessed the inspiring ceremonial, covering a period of several days, obtained nearly as vivid and startling a view, or as original an idea of what transpired, as the seventy-foot panel presented when the race was over. In fact, it would have been impossible for mortal man to have seen such scenes over there, unless he had been possessed of supernatural faculties.

It is difficult to label any one part as being better than another. The sense of awe that possesses one on gazing upon that seventy-foot picture is something which never before, perhaps, has been conveyed in just the same manner. It must be seen to be believed.

"Art" Young has produced in that panel several noble, haughty busts, the deeply overshadowing hair descending close to the eyebrows—a beautiful group of direct action, socialists in winding sheets and turbans—carrying a banner, on which is inscribed "Long Live the Kink." That last touch, the final, erroneous "k" he must have, apparently.

The artists made the procession a kind of cattle show. To meet at the throne came two parades composed of horses, elephants, camels, men and maidens, many of the latter most glorious.

The animals appear to live and move, to roll their eyes, to gallop, prance and curvet, the veins of their faces and legs seem distended with circulation. And yet they have an odd something that makes them far more interesting than if they were more like nature. There is a monkey with an expression of heavenly grief and resignation, indescribably beautiful and touching. It is impossible to conceive an expression more deep and fervent. You expect something of this sort of expression in the face of a dog who has just lost his master, and you would not be surprised if on the face of the camel there was a chilly, concentrated look. But the camels in this picture grin.

It is the union of nature with ideal beauty, evidently. Any way, the grandeur and originality of the design were being equally praised by contemporary critics when I finally pulled myself apart at midnight.